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The Effect Of Community-Based Social Studies Learning Management Combined With Project-Based Learning To Promote Disciplined Behavior And Responsibility For Learning Among Primary School Students In A Small School

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Abstract

This study aims to 1) establish a community-focused learning framework for social studies that incorporates project-based learning; and 2) evaluate the outcomes of this instructional approach. The research utilizes a one-group pretest-post-test experimental design, involving 67 students from six small schools in the Hat Yai District, administered by the Primary Educational Service Area of Songkhla, Area 2, during the first semester of the 2024 academic year. The research instruments comprised a social studies lesson plan incorporating community-based and project-based learning, a social studies achievement assessment, a behavioral evaluation of students' responsibility towards their studies, and a satisfaction survey gauging students' perception of the teaching model. We conducted data analysis employing essential statistical methods including percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The research results indicate that: The community-based, project-based learning methodology for social studies comprises four instructional plans, each spanning 16 weeks and totaling 16 hours, executed in five phases: Phase 1 encompasses brainstorming and selecting social studies topics; Phase 2 entails executing the social studies project; Phase 3 emphasizes reflecting on the project process; Phase 4 involves presenting the social studies project to the community; and Phase 5 focuses on evaluating the project's effectiveness. The application of this method revealed a substantial enhancement in students' disciplined behavior regarding their learning responsibilities following the intervention, achieving statistical significance at the .01 level. Furthermore, students' social studies achievement scores were markedly elevated following the learning period, also at the .01 significance level. The evaluation of student satisfaction with this instructional model indicated a generally elevated level of satisfaction ($M = 4.61$, $SD = 0.26$).

Keywords: Community based, Project based, Disciplined behavior and responsibility, Small schools

Introduction

The rapid global transformations of the 21st century have profoundly impacted human life across various domains, including the economy, society, technology, and education. These changes highlight Thailand's ongoing challenges in striving to advance and remain competitive internationally. The National Education Plan (2017–2036) requires adjustments to current educational practices to meet the demands of workforce development and production. This adjustment prioritizes educational approaches that equip learners with essential 21st-century skills, encompassing both the knowledge and competencies necessary for daily life, professional pursuits, and the nation's socioeconomic progress amid constant change. The primary objective is to cultivate in all learners the "3Rs and 8Cs" skill set, which includes:

- **3Rs**: reading, writing, and arithmetic.
- **8Cs**:
  - Critical thinking and problem solving,
  - Creativity and innovation
  - Cross-Cultural Understanding,
  - Collaboration, teamwork, and leadership.
  - Communication, information, and media literacy,
  - Computing and ICT literacy,

- Career and learning skills
- Empathy, discipline, morality, and ethics characterize compassion (Office of the Education Council Secretariat, 2017, p. 16).

This framework underscores the educational system's role in developing well-rounded, globally aware, and competent citizens ready to contribute to and thrive in an evolving world.

An analysis of previous issues in social studies instruction reveals that the COVID-19 pandemic led to the disruption of learning for over 15 million Thai students, resulting in a loss of approximately one-third of the academic year. This cumulative absence from school has created long-term impacts, including educational inequities and reduced opportunities for students to engage in experiential learning or independently seek answers. Additionally, the support systems for online teaching were insufficient for teachers (Pakkarawat Seelatecho, Phisanu Homsombat, & Sa-ard Phunasorn, 2021, p. 304-305). Similarly, Natthaphon Phasuk, Chanporn Prommas, and Kasemsan Panitcharoen (2022, p. 74) observed that educators often rely on traditional lecture methods, with course content and instructional materials generally tied to textbooks that lack contemporaneity and diversity. Students are primarily memorizing content to pass exams, while classroom activities lack stimulation or challenge, failing to encourage critical thinking, analysis, or reasoning about the problems under study. Furthermore, interdisciplinary connections, particularly those relevant to students' lives or local communities, remain limited, leading students to overlook the relevance and importance of social studies.

Community-based learning in social studies is an instructional strategy that integrates curriculum content with community connections through experiential, work-based learning. This approach enables students to learn through hands-on involvement in real community contexts, fostered by collaboration among teachers, students, and community members. For instance, students may study local history, cultural practices, livelihoods, handicrafts, traditional healthcare, and community-based organizations, extending learning beyond the classroom. A central component of this learning process is critical reflection, which deepens students' understanding of curriculum content while enhancing their awareness of the community (Tipyarat Koedmongkol, Sawetaphon Tangwancharoen, & Sawitree Thautao, 2024, p. 14).

Combined with project-based learning, this approach encourages students to pursue knowledge and seek answers to questions that intrigue them through various investigative methods. Project-based learning allows students to select topics of personal or group interest, collaboratively making decisions to produce outcomes that have practical applications in real life. This model incorporates diverse techniques such as group work, critical thinking exercises, and problem-solving skills (Chalermphon Sritanda, Charin Mangkhum, & Saewang Saenbut, 2024, p. 68).

Integrating community-based and project-based learning in social studies promotes students' engagement with real-world problems, encouraging analytical thinking, planning, and problem-solving that benefit the community. This approach instills a civic mindset, allowing students to learn about their roles and responsibilities within society, their contributions to social development, and the importance of preserving the public good. Working on community-related issues enhances students' understanding of collaborative efforts for the common good and supports sustainable social development.

Given the aforementioned reasons, the research team recognizes the importance of addressing the learning challenges faced by primary students in small schools. This study focuses on fostering responsible learning behaviors, enhancing social studies achievement, and improving student satisfaction with community-based, project-based learning in social studies among grade 5 students. This study specifically targets small schools within the Hat Yai District under the Primary Educational Service Area of Songkhla, Area 2, with the aim of informing future strategies. These strategies aim to involve students actively in local and community-centered work, thereby contributing to more engaged and contextually relevant learning experiences.

Research Objectives

1. The goal is to create a project-based, community-based learning model for social studies teaching in small schools in the Hat Yai District, which falls under the Primary Educational Service Area of Songkhla, Area 2.
2. The goal is to assess the results of introducing community-based, project-based social studies education for 5th graders in small schools in the Hat Yai District, which falls under the jurisdiction of Songkhla's Primary Educational Service Area.

Research Methodology

This study employed an experimental one-group pretest-posttest design.

1. Population The population for this research comprised grade 5 students from small schools within the Hat Yai District, under the jurisdiction of the Primary Educational Service Area of Songkhla, Area. The participating schools included Wat Chontharatprasith School, Wat Don School, Ban Koh Nok School, Ban Khuan School, Wat Bang Luk School, and Ban Tha Sai School, all located in Hat Yai District, Songkhla Province. Purposive sampling selected a total of 67 students from six classrooms.

2. **Research Design**
This study utilized an experimental research design, specifically a one-group pretest-posttest design, in which a single group is tested before and after the intervention.

3. Research Variables
3.1 **Independent Variable**: The community-based, project-based learning approach in social studies, aimed at fostering disciplined behavior and responsibility towards learning.
3.2 **Dependent Variables**:

- Scores on disciplined behavior and responsibility towards learning for grade 5 students, measured before and after the learning intervention.
- Social studies achievement scores for grade 5 students, assessed before and after the intervention.
- Levels of student satisfaction with the instructional approach, measured using the community-based, project-based social studies learning model.

4. Research Instruments
4.1 **Instructional Tools**: The instructional tools used included a community-based, project-based social studies learning plan, consisting of four plans spanning a total of 16 weeks and 16 hours. The instructional plan achieved average scores between 4.65 and 5.00, with a standard deviation range of 0.00 to 0.82.
4.2 **Data Collection Instruments**:
4.2.1 **Behavioral Assessment for Disciplined Responsibility in Learning**: This is a 5-point Likert scale assessing six primary behaviors (each with five items): 1) Leadership, 2) Compliance with school regulations, 3) Punctuality, 4) Self-confidence, 5) Responsibility, and 6) Perseverance. Additionally, it assesses six specific behaviors (each with five items): 1) Team participation, 2) Adherence to school-agreed rules, 3) Activity completion within designated timelines, 4) Confidence in self-expression, 5) Task responsibility, and 6) Resilience in facing challenges and obstacles. This scale is designed to achieve a mean score of 3.50 or higher, with a standard deviation not exceeding 1.00, with scoring weights assigned to responses as follows:

Scoring Scale:

- Strongly Agree = 5 points
- Agree = 4 points
- Neutral = 3 points
- Disagree = 2 points
- Strongly Disagree = 1 point

Interpretation Criteria for Disciplined Responsibility Behavior Scores:

- Average score of 4.51–5.00: Indicates a very high level of agreement.
- Average score of 3.51–4.50: Indicates a high level of agreement.
- Average score of 2.51–3.50: Indicates a moderate level of agreement.
- Average score of 1.51–2.50: Indicates a low level of agreement.
- Average score of 1.00–1.50: Indicates a very low level of agreement.

4.2.2 **Social Studies Achievement Test**: This test is a multiple-choice assessment with 30 items, each worth 1 point, for a total possible score of 30 points. The test's validity indicators include an Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) ranging from 0.80 to 1.00, a difficulty index (p) between 0.49 and 0.64, a discrimination index (r) from 0.44 to 0.73, and a reliability coefficient of 0.81.
4.2.3 **Student Satisfaction Survey on Instructional Model**: This survey uses a 5-point Likert scale, consisting of 20 items divided into four aspects: content (5 items), learning activities (5 items), assessment and evaluation (5 items), and perceived benefits (5 items). The scale follows the same scoring criteria as the Behavioral Assessment for Disciplined Responsibility in Learning, with a target mean score of 3.50 or higher and a standard deviation not exceeding 1.00.

5. Data Collection Procedures
5.1 Measure students' disciplined responsibility behavior using the Behavioral Assessment for Disciplined Responsibility in Learning before implementing the community-based, project-based social studies learning model.
5.2 Assess students' social studies achievement using the Social Studies Achievement Test prior to the implementation of the community-based, project-based learning model.
5.3 Implement the community-based, project-based learning model for social studies with students in small schools.

5.4 Measure students' disciplined responsibility behavior using the Behavioral Assessment for Disciplined Responsibility in Learning after implementing the community-based, project-based learning model.
5.5 Assess students' social studies achievement using the Social Studies Achievement Test following the implementation of the community-based, project-based learning model.
5.6 Evaluate students' satisfaction with the community-based, project-based learning model in social studies for primary school students.

6. Data Analysis

6.1 **Behavioral Analysis**: Compare students' disciplined responsibility behavior before and after the implementation of community-based, project-based learning in social studies for students in small schools. This comparison will use the t-test for dependent samples, calculated as a Difference Score.

6.2 **Achievement Analysis**: Compare students' social studies achievement before and after the implementation of community-based, project-based learning for students in small schools. This comparison will also use the t-test for dependent samples, calculated as a Difference Score.

6.3 **Satisfaction Analysis**: Analyze students' satisfaction with the community-based, project-based learning model for primary school social studies. This will involve calculating the mean (M), standard deviation (SD), and conducting a content analysis with descriptive interpretation.

Research Findings Summary

1.The community-based, project-based learning model for social studies demonstrated positive effects on social studies achievement and the development of disciplined, responsible learning behaviors among students in small schools. The research team collaboratively synthesized and designed a social studies instructional plan using this model, which included four units covering 16 hours and focusing on the concept of “sufficiency economy." The content areas included: 1) Applying the principles of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy; 2) Building a self-sufficient community; 3) Community development according to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy; and 4) A self-sufficient, fulfilling life.

We implemented the instructional model using the following five steps:

1. Choosing social studies topics.
2. Conducting the social studies project.
3. Reflecting on the social studies process.
4. We are showcasing the results of our social studies project to the community.
5. Evaluating the project’s effectiveness.

This structured approach aims to enhance students' practical understanding of social studies concepts, connect learning to real-life community contexts, and cultivate responsible citizenship.

2. Effects of Community-Based, Project-Based Social Studies Learning on Disciplined Responsibility Behavior and Social Studies Achievement for Students in Small Schools

1) Comparison of Average Scores for Disciplined Responsibility Behavior: A comparison of the average scores for disciplined responsibility behavior in learning, measured before and after the implementation of the community-based, project-based learning model among grade 5 students in small schools within the Hat Yai District, under the Primary Educational Service Area of Songkhla, Area 2, revealed the following:

The overall post-learning average score for disciplined responsibility behavior (M = 2.37, SD = 0.19) was higher than the pre-learning average score (M = 1.81, SD = 0.30). When analyzing specific aspects, the highest post-learning average score was observed in the primary behavior category (M = 2.38, SD = 0.22), followed by specific behaviors (M = 2.36, SD = 0.16), as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1 Effect of Community-Based, Project-Based Social Studies Learning on Disciplined Responsibility Behavior in Learning for Grade 5 Students in Small Schools within the Hat Yai District, under the Primary Educational Service Area of Songkhla, Area 2 (n = 67)

Disciplined Responsibility Behavior	Testing Phase	M	S.D.	Interpretation
Primary Behavior	Pretest	1.84	0.23	Fair
	Posttest	2.38	0.22	Good
Specific Behavior	Pretest	1.78	0.38	Fair
	Posttest	2.36	0.16	Good
Overall	Pretest	1.81	0.30	Fair
	Posttest	2.37	0.19	Good

This table demonstrates that the posttest scores for both primary and specific behaviors in disciplined responsibility were significantly higher than pre-learning scores, with the overall behavior moving from a "Fair"

to a "Good" level.

2) Comparison of Average Social Studies Achievement Scores Before and After Learning with a Community-Based, Project-Based Approach for Grade 5 Students in Small Schools within the Hat Yai District, under the Primary Educational Service Area of Songkhla, Area 2

The results indicate that social studies achievement scores for grade 5 students using the community-based, project-based learning approach significantly improved after the intervention, with statistical significance at the .01 level. The post-learning mean score was 20.68 (SD = 3.36), compared to a pre-learning mean score of 11.01 (SD = 2.06). Overall, the difference in average scores before and after learning was 9.67 points, with a t-test value of 26.10, showing a significant increase in social studies achievement following the community-based, project-based intervention. Details are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Comparison of Social Studies Achievement Scores Before and After Community-Based, Project-Based Learning for Grade 5 Students in Small Schools (n = 67)

Test Phase	Mean Score (M)	S.D.	Mean Difference	t-test	Significance
Pretest	11.01	2.06	9.67	26.10	.01
Posttest	20.68	3.36			

This table highlights the significant improvement in social studies achievement for students following the community-based, project-based learning model.

3) Student Satisfaction with Community-Based, Project-Based Learning in Social Studies for Primary Students in Small Schools within the Hat Yai District, under the Primary Educational Service Area of Songkhla, Area 2

The study found that student satisfaction with the community-based, project-based learning model for social studies was very high overall, with a mean score of 4.61 (SD = 0.26). When analyzing specific aspects, content received the highest satisfaction score with a mean of 4.63 (SD = 0.29), followed by perceived benefits (M = 4.62, SD = 0.24), learning activities (M = 4.61, SD = 0.28), and assessment and evaluation (M = 4.58, SD = 0.23). These results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3 Student Satisfaction with Community-Based, Project-Based Social Studies Learning for Primary Students in Small Schools

Satisfaction Aspect	Mean (M)	S.D.	Interpretation
Content	4.63	0.29	Very High
Perceived Benefits	4.62	0.24	Very High
Learning Activities	4.61	0.28	Very High
Assessment and Evaluation	4.58	0.23	Very High
Overall Satisfaction	**4.61**	**0.26**	**Very High**

This table shows that students rated all aspects of the community-based, project-based learning model highly, with the content area receiving the highest satisfaction.

Discussion

1. The community-based, project-based social studies learning model, evaluated by five experts for its effects on academic achievement and disciplined responsibility behavior among students in small schools, was found to be suitable and coherent overall. It received average scores ranging from 4.60 to 5.00, with standard deviations between 0.00 and 0.45, indicating high suitability. This instructional model was developed systematically and with clearly defined steps, emphasizing a structure conducive to experimental and instructional applications.

The community-based, project-based model follows a systematic instructional design incorporating five steps:

- Step 1: Preparing to think and selecting social studies themes – Students, in groups of 5-6, explore topics relevant to their local community through seven key investigative tools.
- Step 2: Practicing through social studies projects – Students follow the designed plan, engaging directly with the community.
- Step 3: Reflecting on the social studies process – Students summarize and synthesize their findings from the community study.
- Step 4: Presenting social studies work to the community – Students share their findings in various formats tailored to their strengths and interests.

- Step 5: Evaluating the effectiveness of social studies projects – Evaluation is conducted by school administrators, teachers, parents, community leaders, and student peers.

This model, focusing on problem-solving and learning through real-life community contexts, encourages students to engage deeply with community issues, gathering and analyzing information, formulating solutions, and presenting their findings. It cultivates a profound understanding of the social and community environment while fostering positive attitudes toward societal engagement.

This approach aligns with previous studies. For instance, Rattima Singhochotsuk and Jintavee Klaisang (2023, p. 218) found that integrating community-based learning with virtual offsite experiences significantly increased students' civic engagement post-intervention at a .05 significance level. Similarly, Umaporn Onkam, Udom Orakul, and Worawan Ubonlert (2018, p. 280) developed a community-based learning model that improved both learning behavior and academic achievement, as well as local career skills, among students in educational opportunity schools. This research supports the idea that a practical, community-integrated curriculum can enhance skill acquisition and empower community and school members to collaboratively participate in educational management.

Additionally, research by Watcharaporn Prapasanobon and Mariam Nilphan (2021, p. 8) demonstrated that a project-based learning model grounded in constructivist theory effectively enabled students to create knowledge through seven structured steps, including inquiry, research, activity engagement, knowledge building, presentation, refinement, and public dissemination. This process allowed students to solidify their understanding, leading to concrete projects utilizing appropriate media and technology. Finally, Phuttachat Sriprapai and Chomnat Chueasuwantawi (2022, pp. 30-31) highlighted that project-based learning significantly improved students' ability to create innovations, with performance levels exceeding 70% and achieving statistical significance at the .01 level.

Overall, these findings underscore the efficacy of community-based, project-based learning in promoting students' cognitive and practical skills, aligning well with 21st-century learning goals.

Behavior of Disciplined Responsibility in Learning: The post-test scores for disciplined responsibility behavior among grade 5 students in small schools within Hat Yai District, Songkhla Primary Educational Service Area 2, were significantly higher than pre-test scores, achieving statistical significance at the .01 level. This improvement is attributed to the structured nature of the community-based, project-based social studies learning model, which emphasizes analytical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration between students and the community. Through planning, field study, interviews, surveys, project analysis, execution, evaluation, reflection, and presentation, students develop a deeper understanding of real social issues, connecting effectively with the learning content.

This aligns with research by Pratima Tanyaboontrakul (2022, p. 83), who developed community-based art activities in media and materials for art courses. Her study showed that students' project quality was at a high level, learning behavior was strong, and creative work using natural-dyed fabric had excellent overall quality. Similarly, research by Kandita Chaisit, Watthana Rattanaprom, and Kritsanee Songsawat (2022, p. 105) on the integration of project-based and collaborative learning models demonstrated that students in the experimental group outperformed the control group in learning achievement and collaboration skills, both with statistical significance at the .01 level. Likewise, Napsorn Yonsuriyan and Chanasit Sitsungnoen (2022, p. 357) studied the impact of a project-based learning model combined with STEM education concepts, finding that grade 5 students' post-test scores were significantly higher than pre-test scores at the .05 level.

The Social Studies Achievement of grade 5 students in small schools within Hat Yai District also significantly improved after learning through a community-based, project-based approach ($p < .01$). By engaging with community-relevant topics and collaborating with local groups, students develop social understanding, higher-order thinking, teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills, consistent with Supriya Phailom's (2019, p. 97) findings. Phailom found that a community-based urban learning model enhanced students' consistency and performance in community-based activities, and significantly increased achievement scores. Similar results were seen in a study by Arkom Wongtongkuea, Chulaporn Srirungsun, and Kanjana Boonsong (2023, p. 260), which demonstrated that students involved in a community-based curriculum had excellent achievement and skill levels.

2. **Student Satisfaction**: Grade 5 students in small schools reported very high overall satisfaction with the community-based, project-based social studies model ($M = 4.61$, $SD = 0.26$). The highest satisfaction was in content ($M = 4.63$, $SD = 0.29$), followed by perceived benefits ($M = 4.62$, $SD = 0.24$), learning activities ($M = 4.61$, $SD = 0.28$), and assessment and evaluation ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 0.23$). The model's emphasis on student participation in community-focused projects likely enhanced satisfaction, encouraging observation, analysis, and communication skills.

These results are consistent with WilaiPorn Rittikup (2018, p. 179), who noted that community-based learning integrates multiple knowledge domains with real-world issues relevant to students' surroundings, promoting problem-solving through direct experience. Similarly, Pranath Kitrungruang, Orapin Sirisamphan, Duanghathai Homchayawong, and Wilapan Uraboonnualchat (2021, p. 27) emphasized that project-based learning fosters 21st-

century skills, producing well-rounded learners suited to Thailand's "4.0" era. Moreover, Saranyu Mundech and Rujron Kaewurai (2020, pp. 182-183) demonstrated that students in project-based and social media-integrated models showed significantly higher creativity scores post-intervention. However, they noted that assessment fairness can be influenced by students' biases toward themselves or peers, suggesting teachers emphasize objective evaluation techniques for consistency.

This comprehensive approach to learning fosters social responsibility and academic skills that are critical for modern learners, aligning with research by Yaowaret Phakdichit and Piraya Photiphithak (2022, p. 106) and Urarath Jendong and Narumon Phusing (2022, p. 166), both of which found that project-based, community-linked curricula significantly enhanced academic performance and satisfaction, creating a well-rounded educational experience.

Recommendations

Based on the study on the effects of community-based, project-based learning in social studies to enhance responsible learning behaviors for students in small schools, the research team proposes the following recommendations:

Recommendations for Applying Research Results

1. Teachers should encourage students to review their project progress regularly, either weekly or at each key project stage. Using guiding questions and reflective journals allows students to assess their roles, responsibilities, and discipline applied throughout the project.
2. Teachers should establish clear behavioral goals for discipline and responsibility, such as punctuality, task delegation, and effective communication. Behavioral assessment tools, such as observation logs from teachers or peers, can provide students with continuous feedback, helping them make ongoing improvements.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. Future studies should examine the effects of community-based, project-based social studies learning with a more diverse sample, including schools in different contexts, such as urban and rural settings. This approach would allow for a comparison of results and an analysis of contextual impacts, broadening the research's scope and acceptance.
2. Researchers should consider additional factors that may influence responsible learning behaviors, such as family support, community collaboration, or technology integration. Exploring these components would provide a clearer understanding of how these elements can either support or challenge the development of student behavior.

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